

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
HA-05 IO-13 AID-05 PC-01 /088 W
-----092048 071559Z /43

R 070645Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1342
INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMCONSUL DURBAN
AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3203

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, SF
SUBJECT: ANNIVERSARY OF JUNE 16 DISTURBANCES

1. EXTENSIVE EMBASSY AND CONGEN, JOHANNESBURG, SOUNDINGS IN THE TRANSVAAL TOWNSHIPS AND AMONGST BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS LEADERS IN THE EASTERN CAPE INDICATE THAT THE BLACK LEADERSHIP, BOTH STUDENT AND COMMUNITY, HOPE FOR A QUIET COMMEMORATION OF THE JUNE, 1976, DISTURBANCES. APPARENTLY THERE IS GENERAL PLANNING FOR COMMEMORATIVE SERVICES BUT NO PLANS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS OR MARCHES. THE OVERALL CONCERN AMONGST OUR BLACK CONTACTS SEEMS TO BE TO AVOID CONFRONTATION WITH SAG AUTHORITIES WHILE AT THE SAME TIME, LETTING THOSE AUTHORITIES AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC KNOW THAT SOWETO 1976 IS NOT FORGOTTEN.

2. IN THE MEANTIME, IT APPEARS THAT THE SAG IS PREPARING FOR A "WORST-CASE" CONTINGENCY. ALREADY WE HAVE RECEIVED ACCOUNTS OF ROADBLOCKS AND PATROLS IN CERTAIN TOWNSHIPS, INCLUDING SOWETO, AND THE POLICE ARE PREPARING TO BE PRESENT IN FORC DURING THE COMMEMORATIVE
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PERIOD.

3. COMMENT: WHILE ALL INTENTIONS ARE TO KEEP THE ANNIVERSARY QUIET, THE PRESENCE OF ARMED POLICE IN FORCE AND EMOTIONAL BLACK CROWDS COULD ALWAYS SPARK A CONFRONTATION. THE POSSIBILITY OF SPORATIC AND ISOLATED FLARE-UPS THEREFORE EXISTS. IT APPEARS,

HOWEVER, THAT THIS YEAR MAY PASS MUCH THE SAME AS
LAST, WHEN BLACKS GENERALLY COMMEMORATED THIS EVENT
WITHOUT VIOLENCE OR CONFLICT WITH AUTHORITIES.

4. CONGEN, JOHANNESBURG, HAS CONCURRED IN SUBSTANCE
ON THIS MESSAGE BUT WILL FOLLOW WITH A MORE DETAILED
ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN SOWETO SPECIFICALLY.
EDMONDSON

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